

## Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CG-00 COA-01 DLOS-03

PM-03 H-01 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 STR-01 /073 W  
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R 032100Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7360

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, EWWT, XL, XK, XM

SUBJ: MEETING TO ESTABLISH JOINT LATIN AMERICAN-CARIBBEAN  
SHIPPING VENTURE

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. MEXICO'S DEPUTY SECRETARY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS,  
RUEBEN GONZALES SOSO, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PORT OF SPAIN  
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JANUARY 31 TO ANNOUNCE THAT SHIPPING OFFICIALS FROM MEXICO,

VENEZUELA, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN WILL SOON HOLD TECHNICAL-LEVEL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THE FORMATION OF A JOINT MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF THIS AREA. THAT MEETING IS TO BE FOLLOWED BY A MINISTERIAL-LEVEL MEETING, TO BE HELD IN COSTA RICA IN MAY. GONZALES SOSO SAID THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE TECHNICAL LEVEL MEETING HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF TRINIDAD, VENEZUELA, BARBADOS, JAMAICA, AND COSTA RICA, AND THAT INVITATION WILL ALSO BE EXTENDED TO CUBA, HAITI, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, COLOMBIA, GUATEMALA, EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA. THE GONZALES SOSO DELEGATION COMPRISED NINE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PLUS HORACE CLARKE, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION SIN JAMAICA, AND ENRIQUE GONZALES, DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN TRADE IN COSTA RICA.

2. PURPOSE OF THE NEW COMPANY IS NOT ONLY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SCHEDULED SHIPPING SERVICES IN THE AREA, BUT ALSO TO BOOST INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE AND PROVIDE STIMULUS TO THE VARIOUS REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION MOVEMENTS. ACCORDING TO COMMENTS MADE AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, ONLY GOVERNMENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE SHIPPING VENTURE; THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL BE EXCLUDED, EVEN THOUGH THE PROPOSED SERVICES ARE TO BE "NOT COMPETITIVE WITH, BUT SUPPLEMENTARY TO EXISTING SHIPPING SERVICES."

END UNCLASSIFIED

3. ACCORDING TO GOTT SHIPPING OFFICIALS, THE PORT OF SPAIN ANNOUNCEMENT DESCRIBED DISCUSSIONS BEGUN AT A JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 1 MEETING IN ST. LUCIA, WHERE GOVERNMENT SHIPPING OFFICIALS FROM ENGLISH CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES HAD FIRST DISCUSSED THE MEXICAN PROPOSAL. THE TRINIDAD OFFICIALS CONFIRMED THAT THE GOTT AND OTHER CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS PLAN TO PARTICIPATE IN A TECHNICAL-LEVEL MEETING IN MEXICO LATE IN FEBRUARY. THEY EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE SURPRISE AND ASTONISHMENT, HOWEVER AT THE FACT THAT GONZALES SOSO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE, SINCE THE TRINIDADIAN HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SERIES OF MEETINGS (AS WELL AS THE PROPOSED SHIPPING VENTURE) WERE INTENDED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL.

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4. COMMENT: THIS PROPOSAL PRESUMABLY IS PART OF OTHER MEXICAN AND VENEZUELAN INITIATIVES RECENTLY TAKEN TOWARD CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. TRINIDAD'S PRIME MINISTER WILLIAMS HAS REPEATEDLY CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF SHIPPING SERVICES OWNED BY CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS TO HAUL PETROLEUM AND BAUXITE, IN ADDITION TO THE TINY SERVICE WHICH NOW HANDLES SOME GENERAL CARGO (WEST INDIES SHIPPING CO.). THUS TRINIDAD MIGHT WELL BECOME AN ENTHUSIASTIC

SUPPORTER OF A WIDER-RANGING PROPOSAL SUCH AS THIS MEXICAN INITIATIVE

JUDGING FROM THEIR SURPRISE THAT THE MEXICANS CALLED A  
PRESS CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THE TRINIDADIAN  
STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT THE MOTIVES BEHIND MEXICAN  
INITIATIVES FOR CLOSER RELATIONS WITH CARIBBEAN STATES.  
MILLER

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